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# Homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25, 1943.

SUBJECT: THE HOME FRONT PLEDGE. Information from Office of Price Administration, and food distribution officials of the War Food Administration.

In a store or post office lately, you may have seen a red, white, and blue poster, showing the picture of a woman wearing an apron. Her right hand is raised, and around the picture these words are printed: I pay no more than top legal prices. I accept no rationed goods without giving up ration stamps.

The woman in the picture is an American woman. Her uplifted hand shows she is taking a pledge...a pledge to join in the fight against unfair prices and unfair distribution of goods.

"I pay no more than top legal prices. I accept no rationed goods without giving up ration stamps." That's the Home Front Pledge millions of American women are taking. It's the weapon of the American homemaker...your weapon...in the attack on black markets and unwarranted price rises.

When you take and keep the Home Front Pledge, you're helping to put a lid on high prices and black markets.

Here's what has happened in New Orleans, where women took and kept the home front pledge. Just a few months ago, homemakers in New Orleans promised they would pay no more than top legal prices, and would buy no rationed goods without giving up ration stamps.

What happened? In a month after these women decided to make rationing work, the average food prices in New Orleans dropped five percent.

The Home Front Pledge succeeded in New Orleans because everyone cooperated --the consumers and the businessmen. When you take the pledge, you'll find your storekeeper ready to cooperate with you.

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Your storekeeper will show you a list of the top legal prices for most of the common items you buy. The newspapers will print the prices too. And it will be easy for you to keep track of these top legal prices, because they'll be the same throughout your community. Black markets thrive on illegally high prices. So you'll keep down your living costs, and at the same time you'll help put the black markets out of business, if you'll keep the first part of the Home Front Pledge--"I pay no more than top legal prices."

The second part of the Home Front Pledge says, "I accept no rationed goods without giving up ration stamps." Your ration book represents your fair share of scarce foods. Your ration book means you're not going to lose your fair share just because Mrs. Smith got to the store first..or because Mrs. Brown has more money than you have...or because Mrs. Jones is a hoarder and has bought up everything in sight.

Anyone who buys in a black market-- that is, without giving up ration stamps --is helping tear down the rationing system. She is taking more than her fair share...and that means someone else, perhaps a fighting man, will get less than his share.

On the subject of rationing, there's one thing many people don't understand, and that is, why you shouldn't give away or trade ration stamps. For example, people who eat out sometimes give away their unused stamps, without stopping to think that their friends who get the extra stamps are getting more than their fair share.

It's patriotic to use rationed goods as sparingly as you can. If you haven't a real need for all the stamps in your book, feel proud that you're saving that much to add to our general supply. And destroy your unused stamps. If you don't, they may fall into dishonest hands.

Your storekeeper has to have stamps in order to buy more stock for his shelves. But he can't legally take your unused stamps, or stamps that have



expired. And don't ask him to accept loose stamps...he has no way of telling from whose book they came. There are only two exceptions to this: your food dealer can accept loose one-point red stamps, as you may have received them in change...and shoe dealers can accept loose shoe coupons when you order shoes by mail.

By the way, if you have a farm or garden, and sell butter, meat, or canned fruits and vegetables, be sure to collect the proper number of ration points and turn them in to your local ration board. Otherwise the people who buy from you will be getting more than a fair share of these foods.

As a homemaker, you hold more than the purse strings of the family...you hold the ration books. That means you have an important part in the success of rationing and price control in your community. You can help by taking only your fair share, and buying only at fair prices.

Remember the two promises of the Home Front. **Pledge:** I pay no more than top legal prices. I accept no rationed goods without giving up ration stamps.

If you'll take and keep that pledge, you'll be doing a good job for your family and your country.

